

**Stalybridge Unitarian Church is a
Free Christian Congregation.**

**A member of The East Cheshire Union of Unitarian and Free
Christian Churches.**

**A member of The General Assembly of Unitarian and Free
Christian Churches.**

**A member of The North Cheshire Unitarian Sunday School
Union**

A corporate member of The Unitarian Christian Association

THE CHALICE

**STALYBRIDGE UNITARIAN CHURCH
MAGAZINE**

FEBRUARY 2007

**THIS ISSUE OF CHALICE IS KINDLY
SPONSORED BY
ALAN AND SUE SWIFT IN MEMORY
OF MR FRANK SWIFT AND MR
EDWARD ROBINSON**

MINISTER'S LETTER



Dear Friends,

The end of January already! The weeks seem to be flying by but before we get too engrossed in the new year I think it is worth a brief look backwards. It was particularly good to be able to welcome so many new people to our church during December. At the memorial service and our two carol services there were quite a number of people who had not worshipped with us before. Let us hope that they found something here which made Christmas a little more special than it would otherwise have been.

December was a busy month for us at church so I hope that you were able to take things a little easier in January! One of the best things about arriving in January is the knowledge that the shortest day has past and the afternoon and early evening is beginning to get ever so slightly lighter each day. It takes a few weeks before we really start to notice a change but during the last few days I have noticed that it is getting darker just a little later at night; and a few more minutes of daylight seems to make all the difference. It's hard to believe that just a few weeks ago we had the shortest day and that in no time at all now the snowdrops will be out and the early daffodils making an appearance. The changes are there if you stop to notice them.

Changes have also happened at church, over a somewhat longer period now, but following the same pattern of slow, gradual change rather than major upheaval. The congregation has changed; some much loved, familiar faces are no longer with us and new people have begun to join us each Sunday.

One of the things that this congregation is particularly good at is welcoming new people. It is very important that if you notice a new person at Sunday worship that you take the time to say hello and make that person feel welcome. Invite them through for coffee after the service. It can make all the difference. Walking into a place for the first time where you don't know anyone can be daunting.

And if you are one of our newer friends then we are very glad you've come to Stalybridge Unitarian Church and we're delighted that you've chosen to be part of our ever-changing and evolving church community.

The church that doesn't change is dead. The healthy church embraces change and lets it flow as seamlessly as the changing seasons.

Wishing you every blessing in the days ahead.

Andrew



DIAMOND WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

We are delighted to be able to congratulate Tom and Margaret (Peggy) Whitehead on the occasion of their Diamond Wedding Anniversary.

Tom and Peggy were married in church on 8th February 1947 by Rev J P Rosling.

Congratulations to both of you from all of us at church.

Ken

WARDEN'S NOTES

As we look forward to 2007 I am happy to report that the congregation remains strong. We are attracting new people to our high quality worship and more people want to get involved in the running of the church. The size of our Christmas service congregations was the best for quite a few years, our average attendance is growing slowly but surely and this must prove that we are doing something right.

Your committee is always looking at ways to handle our resources and therefore to ensure the long term future of the church. Our forefathers blessed us with a strong, well built church but I am sure you are all aware that the maintenance and upkeep of such a building is far from cheap.

We do not receive any money from central funds (except the occasional grant which should not and must not be relied on) and therefore we have to raise all our finances ourselves. We have to keep thinking of new ways to raise money as, if we are to continue our success, we must generate sufficient funds to finance the Ministry of Rev Andrew Parker.

I am aware that perhaps I am preaching to the converted but I must remind you that it is the duty of the congregation to support our fund raising initiatives as much as possible. New members to the Fund Raising Group are more than welcome. We always need new ideas.

We also have to continue to raise our profile within Stalybridge. Andrew is working hard with his fellow members of the clergy in Stalybridge but we also have to help as much as possible with this. People are beginning to realise that we are a Free Christian Congregation, we are a congregation that knows exactly what it is and where it is going.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we must all encourage more people to join in our worship. Worship is the cornerstone of our faith and this must always be our priority.

We are all fortunate to be members of this congregation. It is a church with a proud history and an exciting future. Let us continue to rejoice in that.

Ken Howard

CHURCH CLEANING

Hazel has been fortunate enough to find a full time job and she is therefore unable to continue with the church cleaning. We would like to thank Hazel for all the hard work over the last couple of years.

We are delighted to inform you that Stephanie Vlachos (Paris and Olivia's mum) has agreed to take on the job. We are very grateful to Stephanie.

Ken

£1 A MONTH CLUB

We are now well into the second six-month period of this year and we still have a few people who have not renewed from last year. It is never too late and if you wish to rejoin or become a member for the first time, then please contact me. I am at church most Sundays, but if you do not see me there I can be contacted on 0161 344 0942 or at 45 Church Street, Dukinfield, SK16 4PR. Last month's winner was Mrs Beryl Plant.

Beryl Bradbury

**OLD CHAPEL PANTOMIME
"CINDERELLA"
10th Feb to 17th Feb 2007
Tickets available from Jenny Halsall
0161 339 7450**

FUND RAISING AND SOCIAL GROUP



I trust you all had a joyous and peaceful Christmas and New Year and are all now ready and waiting to join in some social and fund raising events we have planned for you.

By the time you read this, we will have had our British Isles Dinner which I hope turned out to be a success.

First of all in February we have our monthly Whist Drive which will be held on Friday 2nd starting at 7.30 pm at church. Everyone is welcome and the cost is £2 per person which includes a raffle ticket and refreshments. We are trying to keep in the routine of holding the whist drives on the first Friday of the month, so unless there is something else special happening, then assume it will be then.

An idea we used a couple of years ago was a Count Your Blessings fund raising scheme. In the centre of this magazine, you can pull out the Count Your Blessings page and all you have to do is put aside the amount of money each day that applies. It starts on Shrove Tuesday (20th February) and finishes a month later on 20th March. In order to give you all time to sort it out we shall be holding a Count Your Blessings Night on Friday 20th April when you can all come along and hand in your collections as well as enjoying a social evening with a bite to eat. Obviously if you live away from the area, you can still do it and send your money into us when you have finished and we will add it to our total on the night. Good luck!

Another future event worth waiting for is our 'Night in Rome' when Andrew, our minister, will be giving a talk illustrated with slides on the trip to Rome which was undertaken last year. A light Italian supper will be served but we need to know numbers, so please look out for the notice on the church notice board. Please give me a ring if you cannot make it to put your name down, but wish to come along.

A couple of other dates for the future also worth noting are:

Summer Fayre on 16th June
Bazaar on 3rd November.

Our next fund raising meeting will take place on Wednesday 21st February starting at 7.15 pm which is just before the church committee meeting which will be held at 8 pm.

Sue Howard

LADIES CONGREGATIONAL SOCIETY (WOMEN'S LEAGUE)

The Ladies Monthly Tea will be held on Wednesday 7th February at 3 pm when the hostess will be Mrs Olwyn Murphy. All ladies are welcome.

The Manchester District Annual general meeting will be held at Stand Chapel on 3rd February starting at 11.30 am. The AGM will be preceded by a short service and followed by lunch.

The Stalybridge ladies will be holding another home bake stall after morning service on Sunday 25th February. This is in aid of the National Project. We hope that you will all support this event.

Margaret Hallsworth



CHALICE EDITOR

Following my appeal in the last edition of Chalice, I am very happy to report that we have had a volunteer to take over the position of Chalice editor. Many thanks to Krystina who is going to give it a whirl. The whole process of handing over may take a couple of months, but her contact details will be inserted in Chalice shortly.

UNITARIAN YOUNG PEOPLE'S GROUP

Leaders for February

4th Feb: Sue Howard
11th Feb: Ruth Mills
18th Feb: Clare Bullock
25th Feb: Sue Howard

All young people, whether regular attenders or visitors, are more than welcome to join us at our UYPG meetings which take place during morning service (after the 2nd hymn) every Sunday. If you have any queries, please contact Clare Bullock on 0161 303 8872.

CHURCH FLOWERS FOR FEBRUARY

4th Mrs Margaret Hallsworth in memory of Vic

11th Mrs Jessie Sykes in memory of
 Mrs Annie Norfolk and Miss Ada Blackburn

18th Mr and Mrs Derek Worthington in memory of
 Mrs A Worthington and Miss Marion Knott

25th Mr and Mrs Ken Howard in memory of
 Miss Margaret Hitchen

STEWARDS FOR FEBRUARY

4th Stuart Hinchliffe

11th: Tom Whitehead

18th: Bill Atkin

25th: Don Andrews

IMPORTANT 2007 DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Sunday March 11th	6.30 pm	ECU Songs of Praise at Dukinfield
Saturday March 7th	2 pm	UCA AGM and 4th Synod
Sunday March 18th	11 am	Mothering Sunday
Saturday April 7th	8 pm	Easter Vigil
Sunday April 8th	11 am	Easter Day Service
Saturday April 14th	11 am	MDA Ladies Meeting at Stalybridge
Saturday May 5th	2 pm	ECU AGM at Denton
Sunday 6th May:	12 noon	Church AGM
Saturday 12th May	2 pm	Arts & Crafts at Old Chapel
Sunday 27th May:	1.30 pm	Whit Sunday (no morning service)
Saturday June 16th	11 am	Summer Fayre
Sunday July 1st		Church closed (Hucklow weekend)
Sunday July 8th	11 am	Anniversary Service
Saturday August 4th	2 pm	5th UCA Synod at Great Yarmouth
Sunday Sept 30th	11 am	Harvest Service
Saturday October 6th	2 pm	NCUSSU AGM at Stalybridge
Saturday October 13th	2 pm	ECU Autumn Meeting
Sunday 21st October	11 am	Ladies Service
Saturday 3rd November	11 am	Bazaar
Sunday 11th November:	11 am	Remembrance Sunday Service
Sunday 2nd December:	11 am	Soroptomist Sunday at Stalybridge
Sunday 9th December:	6.30 pm	Memorial Service
Sunday 23rd December:	2.30 pm	Juvenile Membership and Family Carol Service
Monday 24th December:	6.30 pm	Christmas Eve Candlelit Carol Service
Tuesday 25th December:	11 am	Christmas Day Service

OBITUARY—NOEL BRADBURY (1925-2006)

This church lost one of its oldest, long standing and most faithful members ever when Noel Bradbury died on Sunday December 3rd 2006.

Noel was a man of many parts, all of them good and all characterised by his basic common sense, reliability, great intellect and sound judgement. All these came into play as he endured his final illness with typical fortitude, good humour and without complaint until the end.

Noel was a dedicated family man, proud of his children and grandchildren, always ready to share with close friends their latest doings, and taking great comfort from them, especially in his later years.

His lifetime of service to his Church and Sunday School was exemplary, as a member of the committee of each, as a leader of the Hob Hill Scout Troop (3rd Stalybridge) and ultimately as Church Warden, a position he held with distinction for over seven years. In his younger years he was an active member of Hob Hill's football and cricket teams and enjoyed billiards and snooker with The Men's Guild.

His sporting activities continued with his membership of Ashton-u-Lyne Golf Club where he made many friends and won several competitions in the seniors section. For over fifteen years Noel also represented the club in senior inter-club matches. He became chairman of the senior section and served them with his usual good sense and diligence for some three years.

Towards the end of the Second World War Noel served his country in the Royal Air Force after which he returned to the textile industry and embarked on what was to become a very successful career. He was academically well qualified as a

Member of The Textile Institute and held several senior positions culminating in his becoming Managing Director of a textile production plant.

Noel will be remembered with great fondness by his many friends and our condolences are sincerely offered to his wife Joan and to all members of his family.

Jack Bredbury.

ARTHUR COOPER

I wish to thank everyone for their kind condolences, expressions of sympathy, and generous donations to the Parkinson's Disease Society.

Our very sincere thanks to Rev Penny Johnson for her moving ministrations as a family member at the crematorium, and thanks to my daughter Margaret for her well chosen address to accompany Penny's.

Edith Cooper

FUNERALS

The funeral of Noel Bradbury took place on 11th December. The Minister conducted the church service followed by committal at Dukinfield.

The funeral of Wilf Pickford took place on 14th December. The church service was conducted by the Minister, this was followed by interment at Mottram Cemetery.

FEBRUARY

- Fri 2nd 7.30 pm Whist Drive
- Sun 4th 11.00 am Morning Service and UYPG.
- Wed 7th 3.00 pm Ladies Society Monthly Tea
- Sat 10th to Sat 17th Old Chapel Pantomime
- Sun 11th 11.00 am Morning Service and UYPG.
- Sun 18th 11.00 am Morning Service and UYPG .
- Tue 20th Count Your Blessings Starts
- Wed 21st 7.15 pm Fund Raising and Social Group meeting
- Wed 21st 8.00 pm Church Committee Meeting
- Sun 25th 11.00 am Morning Service and UYPG.
- Tue 27th 7.30 pm NCUSSU Delegates meeting
at Stalybridge

Fri 2nd March 7.30 pm Whist Drive